

2 Chronicles 36 – Thursday, May 25th, 2017

2 Chronicles 36 -- 1 Then the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and made him king in his father's place in Jerusalem. 2 Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. 3 Now the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem; and he imposed on the land a tribute of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. 4 Then the king of Egypt made Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother and carried him off to Egypt.

- The chapter begins with an interesting detail that's not so easily noticed at first read and it has to do with the son of Josiah.
- Namely, Jehoahaz, who we're told was made king in his father's place by way of the people of the land choosing him as king.
- The reason this detail is interesting is that Jehoahaz was not the heir apparent in the sense of him being the first-born son.

- What's even more interesting is that Jehoahaz, as their man chosen king, is conspicuously absent from the lineage of Christ.

Matthew 1:9–12 (NKJV) — 9 Uzziah begot Jotham, Jotham begot Ahaz, and Ahaz begot Hezekiah. 10 Hezekiah begot Manasseh, Manasseh begot Amon, and Amon begot Josiah. 11 Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon. 12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel.

- The lesson here becomes quite clear; God's ways are not our ways. As Pastor Chuck Smith said, man proposes God disposes.

Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV) — 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Proverbs 16:9 (NKJV) — 9 A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

Proverbs 21:31 (NKJV) — 31 The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But deliverance is of the LORD.

5 Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD his God. 6 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him, and bound him in bronze fetters to carry him off to Babylon. 7 Nebuchadnezzar also carried off some of the articles from the house of the LORD to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon. 8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, the abominations which he did, and what was found against him, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. Then Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place.

- I don't know if it's possible to overstate the evil of this puppet king who was basically left in Jerusalem to collect Necho's taxes.
- Sadly, Jehoiakim like his brother Jehoahaz didn't follow in the godly father who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.
- So much so, Jehoiakim would actually end up burning the scroll with the very Word of God written on it his father cherished.

Jeremiah 36:27–32 (NKJV) — 27 Now after the king had burned the scroll with the words which Baruch had written at the instruction of Jeremiah, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying: 28 "Take yet another scroll, and write on it all the former words that were in the first scroll which Jehoiakim the king of Judah has burned. 29 And you shall say to Jehoiakim king of Judah, 'Thus says the LORD: "You have burned this scroll, saying, 'Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and cause man and beast to cease from here?'" 30 Therefore thus says the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: "He shall have no one to sit on the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat of the day and the frost of the night. 31 I will punish him, his family, and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring on them, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the men of Judah all the doom that I have pronounced against them; but they did not heed." ' " 32 Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.

- It's because of his rebellion that Nebuchadnezzar takes him captive to Babylon, as he conquers all the surrounding nations.
- Specifically, that of Egypt and Assyria, vis-à-vis Judah, which is why he first will start out by making Jehoiakim a subject of his.
- As such this begins the Babylonian captivity under the Babylonian empire in which Daniel and his fellow Hebrews are enslaved.

- Actually, this is the first of three invasions, which happened in 605 B.C., leading to the other two in 597 B.C. as well as 586 B.C.
- In 2 Kings 24:1, were provided with detail concerning Jehoiakim rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar after becoming his vassal.
- What's interesting about this is he did this after Nebuchadnezzar had to return to Babylon to secure succession to the throne.

Of this one commentator wrote, "This campaign of Nebuchadnezzar was interrupted suddenly when he heard of his father's death and raced back to Babylon to secure his succession to the throne. He traveled about 500 miles in two weeks—remarkable speed for travel in that day. Nebuchadnezzar only had the time to take a few choice captives (such as Daniel), a few treasures and a promise of submission from Jehoiakim. ...When Nebuchadnezzar had to make a hurried return to Babylon, Jehoiakim took advantage of his absence and rebelled against him."

9 Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD.

- Here we have yet another evil king of Israel with this Jehoiachin who is so evil that he would only reign for a total of 3-months.

Adam Clarke of this king wrote, "That he was a grievous offender against God, we learn from Jeremiah 22, which the reader may consult; and in the man's punishment, see his crimes."

Jeremiah 22:24-30 -- 24 "As surely as I live," declares the LORD, "even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. 25 I will deliver you into the hands of those who want to kill you, those you fear—Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the Babylonians. 26 I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. 27 You will never come back to the land you long to return to." 28 Is this man Jehoiachin a despised, broken pot, an object no one wants? Why will he and his children be hurled out, cast into a land they do not know? 29 O land, land, land, hear the word of the LORD! 30 This is what the LORD says: "Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah."

10 At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar summoned him and took him to Babylon, with the costly articles from the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah, Jehoiakim's brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem. 11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. 12 He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. 13 And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear an oath by God; but he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel.

- This is interesting for several reasons, chief of which is that Zedekiah rebelled in his refusal to humble himself before Jeremiah.
- Furthermore, we're also told that Zedekiah stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord God of Israel.
- It seems there was a progression of sorts as it relates to Zedekiah's rebellion in that he was given many opportunities to repent.

Of this one commentator wrote, "Zedekiah first disregarded Jeremiah's messages (Jeremiah 34:1-10); he came in time to direct his inquiries to this same prophet (Jeremiah 21); and he finally pled with him for help (Jeremiah 37). But at no point did he sincerely submit to the requirements of the Lord that Jeremiah transmitted to him."

- There's another interesting detail here and it has to do with Zedekiah not only rebelling against God but also Nebuchadnezzar.
- The reason it's so interesting is there were false prophets preaching victory and Zedekiah listened to them instead of Jeremiah.
- This because, Zedekiah didn't like the message Jeremiah the prophet had delivered to him, which is why he imprisoned him.

Jeremiah 32:1-5 (NKJV) — 1 The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD—in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. 2 For then the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah's house. 3 For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, "Why do you prophesy and say, 'Thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; 4 and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape from the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face, and see him eye to eye; 5 then he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall be until I visit him," says the LORD; "though you fight with the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed" '?"

14 Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem. 15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.

- Woven into the fabric of the narrative we have a very important principle having to do with the Lord's wrath against his people.
- Specifically because it reached the point where there transgression was more and more until there was no longer a remedy.
- In other words, though they were rebuked and warned repeatedly, they continued to stiffen their necks and mock the prophets.

Proverbs 29:1 (NKJV) — 1 He who is often rebuked, and hardens his neck, Will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

- Lest one think that God is unjust in His wrath against his people, let me hasten to point out the detail we're given in verse 15.
- Notice the prophets would rise up early and warn God's people because He had compassion on them and His dwelling place.
- The reason I point this out is because it speaks to the nature of God Who is longsuffering, merciful and full of compassion.

F.B. Meyer had some interesting insight into this, "What a touching a graphic phrase! How did God yearn over that sinful and rebellious city! Like a man who has had a sleepless night of anxiety for his friend or child, and rises with the dawn to send a servant on a message of inquiry, or a message of love. How eager is God for men's salvation."

Of this Adam Clarke wrote, "Thus, ends the history of a people the most fickle, the most ungrateful, and perhaps on the whole the most sinful, that ever existed on the face of the earth. But what a display does all this give of the power, justice, mercy, and long-suffering of the Lord! There was no people like this people, and no God like their God."

17 Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand. 18 And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all these he took to Babylon. 19 Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions.

- As graphic as the detail is here, I think we would do well to understand why it is that God allows the temple to be destroyed.
- Just the fact that God would allow this to happen would seem to indicate that He was simply unable to let everything continue.
- In other words, He would rather have it destroyed than to allow His people to continue with what they were doing in the temple.

20 And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years. 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, 23 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people? May the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!

- The chapter and with it the book of 2 Chronicles actually ends with an introduction to the next book, which is the book of Ezra.
- As we'll see in the first chapter, Cyrus will make a decree permitting Ezra and the Babylonian captives to return to Jerusalem.
- As such, they will rebuild the temple in the year 538 B.C., which will be a fulfillment of the many prophecies that foretold this.